
Study Group - “Liberation *in the Palm of Your Hand*”
A Commentary by The Venerable Geshe Doga
Translated by Samdup Tsering



ལྷོ་ལམ་རིམ་རྒྱུ་ལ་ལག་བཅངས།

5 December 1995

Make sure that you generate the motivation of bodhicitta, by thinking that studying and practising this teaching of the stages of the path is to attain the complete state of enlightenment, for the sake of all sentient beings.

The Importance of Motivation

When instructed to generate the right frame of mind, we should understand that our mind can be changed, or transformed, or modified. In actuality the fundamental nature of the mind is crystal clear, and not polluted by any negativities. Rather, it is due to conditional factors that we generate the various types of thoughts in the mind, which can be very destructive and disturbing.

In trying to bring some transformation to our mind we are trying to get rid of these disturbing thoughts, and replace them with positive ones such as a good heart or benevolent attitude. With the cultivation of such a positive frame of mind, our actions will yield very positive results.

Since our motivation has influence over our actions, it is very important to check one’s motivation before engaging in any activities. It makes some difference to our daily actions if, on first getting up in the morning, we check our mind and begin the day with a very positive mind - a mind which cares for other beings. Depending upon the amount of effort we make, and our level of knowledge and skills, developing this habit can enable us to make progress in transforming our mind, and thereby our actions.

So whenever we are advised to generate the right motivation, we have to develop the notion that if we make some effort, our mind can be changed - even if we find disturbing thoughts there. We must generate the conviction that if we wish, we can change our mind.

Being Able To Enjoy Life Depends Upon Our Mind

As a benefit of achieving some purification in our mind we can experience some sense of happiness and purity and peace within ourselves, as well as experiencing happiness from the good outer conditions of life. Whereas if our mind is not pure, and is filled with some negativity, then we lack peace within and cannot find any peace or satisfaction from outside factors. So creating the right conditions for mental peace and happiness is essential. It is also our responsibility.

Our physical comfort is also important to us, and it depends upon ourselves as to whether we enjoy good or bad health. To some extent it is beyond our control due to the karmic actions of past lives, but the immediate conditions are within our control. We have the knowledge of what is suitable, and what is not suitable for our health. So we should take every action to prevent those unsuitable conditions, and meet the suitable ones. For example, if we are sick but take the right medicine, then our health can be restored to normal.

In the same way we can maintain the soundness of our mind. It is in our own hands to avoid those conditions which bring unhappiness and unease to the mind. By removing those conditions, and creating the conditions for happiness, then to a certain degree we can create the conditions for inner peace and happiness.

As Geshe-la always says: we can be our own best excellent master when we place less hope on outer factors and conditions. Then we place less hope on outside friends to provide support or pity. If we become our own master then we shall never have to feel unhappy, disappointed or discouraged about life because there is no-one who cares for us. Thinking like that, there is the expectation that others will do things for us so we feel helpless and disappointed if they do not. It is all due to our state of mind.

So our mind can be the direct cause of our own suffering or misery. If we examine our mind thoroughly, it might only be a small thought that is the cause of our misery, and getting rid of that thought is the solution to the problem. It can also be our own thoughts or state of mind which prevent us enjoying life, or the good conditions in which we live. Such thoughts blind us to those good conditions. In such situations we are unhappy, not because there are no conditions for happiness, but because of our untamed thoughts we do not recognise them. So there are advantages of learning about our own mind, and putting these teachings on mind training into practice.

Just as suffering mainly arises from within our mind, so true happiness is also something to be found within our mind. Our goal in life is enjoying physical and mental happiness. If we find that, then there is no need to worry about anything else: it does not matter much whether we

are materially rich or poor. On the other hand, if we do not enjoy happiness of mind and body in our life, then what is the use of becoming very rich? In fact it will turn out that the richer we are, the more things there are to worry our mind, and exhaust our body.

Therefore when we talk of happiness or satisfaction or fulfilment, it all depends upon contentment with whatever we possess in life. It does not depend upon many outer factors. For instance we can see many people who are not all that rich, but who live a very contented life. Whereas there are others who have millions and millions of dollars, and lead a very busy life. Mentally they are continuously restless, and physically they are always very busy.

In terms of our outer living conditions of comfort we are talking about the conditions to feed one mouth, the clothes for one body, and the shelter for one body. In terms of material conditions finding those requirements is not that hard, and they are sufficient, because we cannot make use of more than that at any one moment. In our pursuit of mental happiness we must learn how to look at our situation in various ways, and in this way we can tame our mind. With a tamed mind we shall live a very satisfactory and contented life with no complaints, regardless of outer conditions.

With an untamed mind we complain when we are unemployed, then we complain when we must work every single day. To rid yourself of these thoughts and feel positive about going to work, consider those who are extremely rich. They must work hard physically for many hours, and mentally worry about their financial situation. Compared to them we have nothing and are very poor, and we have to work to make a living, but then even those who are very rich must also work very hard.

So looking at our situation in such different ways, can help to calm the mind, and thereby enable us to find inner peace and happiness.

422.221.111.6 6th Root Delusion: Afflicted View

ལྷན།

To continue the Lam Rim teaching we have finished the first five root delusions called the five non-view delusions. The 6th root delusion is called Afflicted View and it has five divisions. This will be discussed next time. For homework go over the five wrong views in the commentary text.

Headings with outline numbering are derived from the Text. Headings without outline numbering are derived from Geshe Doga's commentary.

The original typescript is prepared from Alan Molloy's original transcript, which has been checked against Damien Busby's notes. Adair Bunnett then checks the typescript against a tape recording, and edits the text, which is finally checked by Alan Molloy.

© **Tara Institute**